

Consumption in Providence.

The statistics of consumption in Providence, as given in the last two monthly reports of the City Registrar, show some very surprising and interesting results.

Dividing the population and the decedents from consumption into two classes, American and foreign, *by parentage*, the statistics show that in one class a remarkable change in the mortality from this disease has been going on in Providence during the last 25 years.

Thus, in the five years from 1856 to 1860, inclusive, of all the decedents from consumption in Providence, 56.45 in each 100 were of American parentage, and 43.55 in each 100 were of foreign parentage.

But in 1881 the proportions were 33.43 in each 100 of American parentage, and 66.57 in each 100 of foreign parentage.

The change has also been *continuous* through the whole period, each quinquennial period from 1856 to 1881 showing a regular decrease, from 56.45 to 33.43, in the proportion of decedents from consumption of American parentage, and a regular increase, from 43.55 to 66.57, in the proportion of those of foreign parentage. The population of the city in 1855 was 59 of American parentage and 41 of foreign parentage in each 100, while in 1880 it was 46 American and 54 foreign in each 100.

These figures would seem to indicate that during this period there had been an actual decrease in the mortality from consumption in the American population by parentage, and it might be inferred that there had also been a corresponding increase of consumption in the foreign population by parentage. But this does not necessarily follow. The actual results in the case must depend upon a comparison of the decedents from consumption of each class with the living population of each class, at the same definite periods. This is given in the mortality report for March.

At four different periods we have had a census of the city, which showed the *parentage* of the population. Taking these periods and comparing the decedents from consumption, by parentage, with the population by parentage in the same periods, we find the following results for the city of Providence:

POPULATION OF AMERICAN PARENTAGE.

1856—One death from consumption in 268.2.
1865—One death from consumption in 310.1.
1875—One death from consumption in 415.0.
1880—One death from consumption in 435.2.

POPULATION OF FOREIGN PARENTAGE.

1856—One death from consumption in 262.6.
1865—One death from consumption in 248.8.
1875—One death from consumption in 283.4.
1880—One death from consumption in 208.0.

TOTAL POPULATION.

1856—One death from consumption in 266.
1865—One death from consumption in 280.
1875—One death from consumption in 336.
1880—One death from consumption in 326.

The preceding figures show several important facts:

1. In regard to the total population, there has been a considerable decrease in the ratio of mortality in the 25 years past; from one death in 266 to one in 326 of the population in a year. In a population of 100,000 this decrease in the rate from consumption would amount to a decrease of 69 in the number of deaths annually.

2. In the population of foreign parentage, the rate of mortality from consumption has changed only very slightly in the past 25 years. In a foreign population, by parentage, of 100,000, the rate of mortality from consumption in 1856, would give 380 deaths annually; the rate of 1880 would give 373 deaths annually. The rate of mortality from consumption in the population of foreign parentage in 1880, was almost exactly the same as the rate in the population of American parentage in 1856.

3. In the population of American parentage in Providence, there has been a most remarkable change in the mortality from consumption during the last 25 years. In 1856, there was, in this population, one death from consumption, in 268.2; in 1880, there was only one death in 435.2. This decrease in the rate of mortality has also been continuous during the whole period, as will be seen by the figures already given. Let us see the effects of this decrease.

1. There were 111 deaths from consumption, in 1880, in the population of American parentage in Providence; if the rate had been the same as in 1856, the number of deaths, would have been 180, instead of 111.

2. There were 211 deaths from consumption, in 1880, in the population of foreign parentage; if the rate in this population had been the same as in the American population, the number of deaths from consumption, in 1880, would have been 130 instead of 211.

3. In a population of American parentage of 100,000, the rate of mortality from consumption, as it was in 1856, would give 373 deaths in a year; while the rate, as it was in 1880, would give only 229 deaths in a year.

It would be interesting to inquire into the causes of this diminution of consumption among a portion of the population of the city; and the reasons why this diminution is in one portion of the population and not in the other. But we may not pursue the subject further at this time.

